

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A video game system for playing a video ~~an~~ image ~~displaying~~ game and for generating a video game display having animated graphics comprising:

a plurality of game cards for use in a card game, each visually portraying a figure of a character and including recorded data,

a video game information storage medium storing a video game program relating to game card character figures,

a video game machine including a processing system for removably receiving therein the video game information storage medium to execute the video ~~an~~ image ~~display~~ game program,

each of said plurality of game cards recording for an associated character depicted, at least identification data of the associated character and characteristic data relating to a characteristic of the associated character and for causing a change to a video ~~a~~ graphics image involving a an animated and displayed associated character dependent on the progress of said video ~~image~~ displaying game;

wherein one of said video game information storage medium and said video game machine includes external information reading circuitry for reading the identification data and characteristic data of the characters recorded on said game cards; and

said processing system, when supplied with the identification data and characteristic data read by said external information reading circuitry from one or more of said game cards being operable to generate animate and display a video display visually portraying said associated character and for processing a video game program of the video image displaying game to cause the change to the video image involving said animated and displayed character by using said characteristic data.

2-6. (cancelled).

7. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 1, wherein said game cards are trading cards each including a figure of a character differing in rarity value.

8. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 1, wherein the characteristic data recorded on at least one of said game cards includes sound data related to at least the associated character, and wherein said processing system generates sound of the associated character on the basis of sound data read by said external information reading circuitry.

9. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 1,  
wherein the characteristic data recorded on at least one of said game cards includes text  
data explaining an individual feature of the associated character, and  
wherein said processing system displays text data read by said external information  
reading circuitry on a game screen.

10. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 1,  
wherein at least the identification data and characteristic data of the characters are  
optically readably recorded on said game cards using a two-dimensional array of dots,  
and

wherein said external information reading circuitry comprises an optical reader for  
optically reading the identification data and characteristic data of the characters recorded  
on said game cards.

11. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 1,  
wherein at least the identification data and characteristic data of the characters are  
electronically readably recorded in a non-volatile memory, and  
wherein said external information reading circuitry comprises a reader for  
electrically reading the identification data and characteristic data of the characters stored  
in said non-volatile memory of said game cards.

12. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 1,

wherein at least the identification data and characteristic data of the characters are magnetically recorded in a magnetic recording area formed in one surface of said game cards, and

wherein said external information reading circuitry comprises a magnetic reader for magnetically reading the identification data and characteristic data of the characters recorded in the magnetic recording area of said game cards.

13. (currently amended) A video game system for playing a video game

providing video game play having animated graphics comprising:

a plurality of collection cards, each visually portraying a figure of a character and including recorded data relating to said character including recorded data enabling animation and display of the character;

a video game information storage medium storing a video game program to display at least some of the characters portrayed on said collection cards on an a video image display device;

a video game machine including a processing system for receiving therein said video game information storage medium to execute an image display the video game program;

wherein at least one of said collection cards includes a particular character other than a character stored in said video game information storage medium and includes

display data recorded thereon for animating and displaying a figure of the particular character in an animated manner on the video image display device, an identification code of the particular character and characteristic data of the particular character, wherein one of said video game information storage medium and said video game machine further comprises external information reading circuitry for reading the identification code and characteristic data recorded on said collection card, said processing system being operable to execute the video game program based on the video game program stored in said video game information storage medium when the identification code and characteristic data of the particular character are not supplied by said external information reading circuitry, and to execute the video game program and process the character data of the particular character when supplied with the identification code and characteristic data of the particular character read from said external information reading circuitry, and to displayprocess the display data of the particular character to animate and display the character during the game.

14. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 13, wherein the characteristic data stored on said collection card includes sound data related to at least the character, and

wherein said processing system generates sound of the character on the basis of sound data read by said external information reading circuitry.

15. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 13, wherein the characteristic data includes ability data related at least to the character, and said processing system changes a display state of the character in the video game based upon ability data read by said external information reading circuitry.

16. (currently amended) A video game card for use in a video game system including a video game information storage medium storing a video game program for generating animating and displaying at least some of the characters depicted on a plurality of such game cards on ~~an~~ a video image display device, a video game machine including a processing system for receiving therein said video game information storage medium to execute ~~an~~ image display a video game program; and external information reading circuitry provided in one of said video game information storage medium and said video game machine for reading data recorded in said game card, said game card comprising:

a visually portrayed figure of a character for use in playing a card game, a machine readable recording of at least an identification code of the character and characteristic data related to said character, said characteristic data including ability data visually recognizably printed on said game card and hidden data not visually

recognizably printed on said game card, and

wherein said characteristic data is disposed on said card such that it can be read by said external information reading circuitry and used in ~~an electronic~~ a video game played on said video game machine to cause a visual change to a video image of an animated and displayed character dependent on progress of the execution of the video game program.

17. (cancelled).

18. (currently amended) A game card according to claim 16, wherein said game card further comprises additional data recorded thereon in addition to said characteristic data, the additional data including a mini-game program for playing a video game which may be added to the game based on the video game program stored in said video game information medium, and

wherein the mini-game program recorded on said game card records a mini-game program for realizing a mini-game in said game card separate from the video game program stored in said video game information storage medium, and

wherein said game card further comprises order data recorded thereon for rearranging parts of the mini-game program.

19. (currently amended) A game card according to claim 16, wherein the characteristic data further includes at least sound data to generate a sound of the character, ability data of the character, and amount data indicating an amount of the sound data and ability data.

20. (currently amended) A game card according to claim 16, wherein the characteristic data further includes at least sound data for generating sound of the character, ability data representative of an ability of the character and text data explaining a feature of the character.

21. (previously presented) A game card according to claim 16, further including additional data corresponding to the identification code of the visually portrayed character and data for determining the amount of data recorded.

22. (previously presented) A game card according to claim 16, wherein said external information reading circuitry comprises an optical reader for optically reading the identification data and characteristic data of the character visually portrayed on said game card, and

wherein said game card includes an optically readable recording of at least the identification data and characteristic data of the character comprising a two-dimensional

array of dots.

23. (previously presented) A game card according to claim 16, wherein said external information reading circuitry comprises a reader for reading the identification data and characteristic data of the visually portrayed character, and wherein said game card includes a non-volatile memory recording at least the identification data and characteristic data of the character.

24. (previously presented) A game card according to claim 16, wherein said external information reading circuitry comprises a magnetic reader for magnetically reading the identification data and characteristic data of the visually portrayed character, and

wherein said game card includes a magnetic memory provided in one surface thereof recording at least the identification data and characteristic data.

25. (currently amended) A video game information storage medium for use in a game system including a plurality of game cards for playing a card game, each card visually portraying a figure of a character and including data recorded thereon related to said character including recorded data to enable animation and display of the character, said video game information storage medium storing a video game program, a video game machine including a processing system for receiving therein said video game

information storage medium to execute ~~an image display~~ a video game program, and external information reading circuitry provided on one of said video game information storage medium and said video game machine to read data recorded on said game card, wherein said plurality of game cards record on a character-by-character basis at least identification codes of the characters and characteristic data for representing individual aspects of the characters depicted with figures,

said video game information storage medium comprising:

a first video game program memory section for storing a first program for playing a video game to display animated characters in ~~an image display~~ a video game display, and

a second video game program memory section for storing a second program for executing a video game using said characteristic data to be added to the first game program when supplied with the identification code and characteristic data read from said external information reading circuitry to control or change at least an aspect of animation and display of a character based on the read data recorded on the game card.

26. (currently amended) A video game information storage medium according to claim 25, wherein said information storage medium is a cartridge including a semiconductor memory storing the first program and second program, and a case accommodating said semiconductor memory and integrally formed with said external information reading circuitry.

27. (currently amended) A video game information storage medium according to claim 25, wherein said game cards store a plurality of kinds of characteristic data on an identification-code-by-identification-code basis, and

said video game information storage medium includes a semiconductor memory storing the first program and second program, a writable/readable memory for writably/readably storing at least part of the characteristic data corresponding to at least part of the identification codes, and a case accommodating said semiconductor memory and writable/readable memory and integrally formed with said external information reading circuitry.

28. (currently amended) A video game system for playing a video game having animated graphics comprising:

a game card for use in a card game, said game card visually portraying a figure of a character and including recorded data,

a video game information storage medium including:

a memory storing a video game program for playing a video game related to said game card, and

reading circuitry for reading information from said game card, the read information enabling animation and display of the character visually portrayed on the game card during play of the video game; and

a video game machine including a processing system for removably receiving

therein the video game information storage medium to execute an ~~image display~~ the video game program.

29. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 28,

wherein said video game information storage medium includes processing circuitry.

30. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 28,

wherein said video game machine is a hand-held device and includes a display.

31. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 28,

where said game card includes identification data of the character portrayed thereon and characteristic data relating to a characteristic of the associated character.

32. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 28,

wherein said video game information storage medium includes, for each of a plurality of characters, a first memory section for storing identification data and characteristic data, and a second memory section that stores identification data and characteristic data acquired during progress of the video game.

33. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 28,

wherein said video game card is one of a plurality of trading cards each including a figure

of a character differing in rarity value, and

    said video game machine uses said cards to play a video game associated with the game program stored in said video game information storage medium.

34. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 28, wherein the ~~characteristic data stored~~recorded on said game card includes sound data related to at least an associated character, and

    wherein said processing system generates sound of the character on the basis of sound data read by said reading circuitry.

35. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 28, wherein said data ~~stored~~recorded on said game card includes text data explaining an individual feature of the character, and

    wherein said processing system displays text data read by said reading circuitry on a game screen.

36. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 28, wherein said game card optically readably records by a two-dimensional array of dots at least identification data and characteristic data of the portrayed character, and wherein said reading circuitry comprises an optical reader for optically reading the identification data and characteristic data of the character recorded on said game card.

37. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 28, wherein said game card includes an electrically readable recording of at least of character identification data and characteristic data of the character in a non-volatile memory, and wherein said reading circuitry comprises a reader for electrically reading the identification data and characteristic data of the character stored in said non-volatile memory of said game card.

38. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 28, wherein said game card includes a magnetic recording of at least character identification data and characteristic data of the associated character in a magnetic recording area formed in one surface thereof, and wherein said reading circuitry comprises a magnetic reader for magnetically reading the identification data and characteristic data of the character recorded in the magnetic recording area of said game card.

39. (currently amended) A removable memory for a video game system comprising:  
a program memory for storing a video game program involving cards;  
a data reader for reading data from at least one card including data enabling

animation and display of a character during play of a video game provided by execution of the video game program;

processing circuitry for processing data read from a card to animate and display the character during play of the video game; and

a connector for connecting to a game machine having a processing system for executing said game program.

40. (original) A removable memory according to claim 39, further including a RAM memory.

41. (original) A removable memory according to claim 39, further including a groove for receiving at least a portion of said game card for reading data from said game card.

42. (currently amended) A removable memory according to claim 39, further including a first game program memory section for storing a first program for playing a game to display animated characters in ~~an image display~~ a video game, and a second game program memory section for storing a second program for executing a game using said characteristic data to be added to the first game program when supplied with the identification code and characteristic data read from said data reader to animate and display the character during play of a video game based on the read

data.

43. (previously presented) A removable memory according to claim 42, wherein said removable memory comprises a cartridge including a semiconductor memory storing the first program and second program, and a case accommodating said semiconductor memory and integrally formed with said data reader.

44. (previously presented) A game system for use with at least one game card visually portraying a figure of a character and including recorded information comprising:

reading circuitry for reading information from said game card;  
a game information storage medium including a memory storing a game program for playing a game related to said at least one game card; and  
a game machine including a processing system for executing an image display game program, wherein a portion of said image display program is stored in said game information storage medium and a portion of the image display program is obtained from said at least one game card.

45. (previously presented) A game system according to claim 44, wherein said game information storage medium includes processing circuitry.

46. (previously presented) A game system according to claim 44, wherein said game machine is a hand-held device and includes a display.

47. (previously presented) A game system according to claim 44, where said game card includes identification data of the character portrayed thereon and characteristic data relating to a characteristic of the associated character.

48. (previously presented) A game system according to claim 44, wherein said game information storage medium includes, for each of a plurality of characters, a first memory section for storing identification data and characteristic data, and a second memory section that stores identification data and characteristic data acquired during progress of the game.

49. (previously presented) A game system according to claim 44, wherein said at least one game card includes a plurality of trading cards each including a figure of a character differing in rarity value, and  
said game system uses said cards to play a game associated with the game program stored in said game information storage medium.

50. (previously presented) A game system according to claim 44, wherein the at least one game card includes sound data related to at least an associated character,

and

wherein said processing system generates sound of the character on the basis of sound data read by said reading circuitry.

51. (currently amended) A video game system for use with at least one game card visually portraying a figure of a character and storing information in the form of a two dimensional array of dots comprising:

reading circuitry for reading the two dimensional array of dots from said game card to enable animation and display of the character in video game play;

a video game information storage medium including a memory storing a video game program for playing a game related to said at least one game card, and

a processing system for executing a card related ~~image display~~ video game program, wherein at least a portion of said card related ~~image display~~ video game program is stored in said video game information storage medium, said processing system being operable to process video graphics image data embodied in said two-dimensional array of dots to generate and display an animated character for video game play.

52. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 51, wherein said reading circuitry and said video game information storage medium are housed in a removable cartridge.

53. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 51,  
wherein said processing system is a hand-held device and includes a display.

54. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 51,  
where said game card includes identification data of the character portrayed thereon and  
characteristic data relating to a characteristic of the associated character.

55. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 51,  
wherein said at least one game card includes a plurality of trading cards including a  
figure of a character differing in rarity value, and  
wherein said game system uses said cards to play a game associated with the video  
game program stored in said video game information storage medium.

56. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 51,  
wherein the at least one game card includes sound data related to at least an associated  
character, and wherein said processing system generates sound of the character on the  
basis of sound data read by said reading circuitry.

57. (currently amended) A video game system for playing an image  
~~displaying~~ a video game having animated graphics and for generating a display

comprising:

a plurality of game cards for use in a card game, each visually portraying a figure of a character and including recorded data including recorded data to enable animation and display of the character,

a video game information storage medium storing a game program relating to game card character figures,

a video game machine including a processing system for removably receiving therein the video game information storage medium to execute ~~an image display~~ a video game program,

said plurality of game cards recording, for each of the characters depicted, at least identification data of the characters and characteristic data relating to a characteristic of an associated character, said identification data and characteristic data when processed by said processing system causing a change to a ~~graphics~~ video image involving ~~a~~ an animated and displayed associated character dependent upon the progress of said ~~image~~ displaying video game;

wherein one of said video game information storage medium and said video game machine includes external information reading circuitry for reading the identification data and characteristic data of the characters recorded on said game cards,

said processing system, when supplied with the identification data and characteristic data read by said external information reading circuitry from one or more of said game cards, processes the characteristic data to apply a change to said ~~graphics~~

video image of a-an animated and displayed associated character as a result of processing the characteristic data and the video game program stored in said game information storage medium, and

    said processing system, when not supplied with the identification data and characteristic data by said external information reading circuitry from one or more of said game cards, executes a process on the basis of only the video game program stored in said video game information storage medium.

58. (previously presented)      A game system comprising:  
    a plurality of game cards for use in a card game, each visually portraying a figure of a character and including recorded data,  
    a game information storage medium storing a game program relating to game card character figures,  
    a game machine including a processing system for removably receiving therein the game information storage medium to execute an image display game program,  
    said plurality of game cards recording, for each of the characters depicted, at least identification data of the characters and characteristic data relating to a characteristic of an associated character;  
    wherein one of said game information storage medium and said game machine includes external information reading circuitry for reading the identification data and characteristic data of the characters recorded on said game cards,

said processing system, when supplied with the identification data and characteristic data read by said external information reading circuitry from one or more of said game cards, processes the characteristic data to apply a change to the original content of the game program stored in said game information storage medium,

said game information storage medium includes, for each of the characters, a first memory section for storing the identification data and characteristic data, and a second memory section for storing identification data and characteristic data acquired during progress of the game, and

said first storage section stores a registering program for writing and registering when the identification data of the character read by said external information reading circuitry is in a predetermined condition, the identification data and characteristic data being read from the game card to said second storage section.

59. (previously presented) A game system comprising:  
a plurality of game cards for use in a card game, each visually portraying a figure of a character and including recorded data,  
a game information storage medium storing a game program relating to game card character figures,  
a game machine including a processing system for removably receiving therein the game information storage medium to execute an image display game program,  
said plurality of game cards recording, for each of the characters depicted, at least

identification data of the characters and characteristic data relating to a characteristic of an associated character;

wherein one of said game information storage medium and said game machine includes external information reading circuitry for reading the identification data and characteristic data of the characters recorded on said game cards,

said processing system, when supplied with the identification data and characteristic data read by said external information reading circuitry from one or more of said game cards, processes the characteristic data to apply a change to the original content of the game program stored in said game information storage medium,

said game information storage medium includes, for each of the plurality of characters, a first memory section for storing identification data and characteristic data, and a second memory section for storing identification data and characteristic data acquired during progress of the game,

said plurality of game cards having recorded thereon as characteristic data, data corresponding to the identification data of one or a plurality of the characters, and

said second storage section further storing, when the identification data of the character read by said external information reading circuitry is in a predetermined state, a program for registering additional data read out of the game card in addition to the characteristic data corresponding to the identification data of the character.

60. (previously presented) A game card for use in a game system including

a game information storage medium storing a game program for generating at least some of the characters depicted on a plurality of such game cards on an image display device; a game machine including a processing system for receiving therein said game information storage medium to execute an image display game program; and external information reading circuitry provided in one of said game information storage medium and said game machine for reading data recorded in said game card, said game card comprising:

    a visually portrayed figure of a character for use in playing a card game,

    a machine readable recording of at least an identification code of the character and characteristic data related to said character, and

    wherein said characteristic data is disposed on said card such that it can be read by said external information reading circuitry and used in an electronic game played on said game machine, and

    wherein said game card includes a recording of additional data in addition to said characteristic data and the additional data includes mini-game program for playing a game which may be added to the game based on the game program stored in said game information storage medium.

61. (currently amended) A game card for use in a video game system including a video game information storage medium storing a game program for generating at least some of the characters depicted on a plurality of such game cards on an image display device; a video game machine including a processing system for

receiving therein said video game information storage medium to execute ~~an image~~ display a video game program; and an external information reading circuitry provided in one of said video game information storage medium and said video game machine for reading data recorded in said game card, said game card comprising:

a visually portrayed figure of a character for use in playing a card game,

a machine readable recording of at least an identification code of the character and characteristic data related to said character, and

wherein said characteristic data is disposed on said card such that it can be read by said external information reading circuitry and used in ~~an electronic~~ a video game played on said game machine, and

wherein said game card is machine-readably recorded with image data for animating and displaying a figure of the character, and said image data is read by said external information reading circuitry from the game card thereby to animate and display the character's figure in a game by said game machine.

62. (currently amended) A game card for use in a video game system including a video game information storage medium storing a game program for generating at least some of the characters depicted on a plurality of such game cards on an image display device; a video game machine including a processing system for receiving therein said video game information storage medium to execute ~~an image~~ display a video game program; and an external information reading circuitry provided in

one of said video game information storage medium and said video game machine for reading data recorded in said game card, said game card comprising:

    a visually portrayed figure of a character for use in playing a card game,

    a machine readable recording of at least an identification code of the character and characteristic data related to said character, and

    wherein said characteristic data is disposed on said card such that it can be read by said external information reading circuitry and used in ~~an electronic~~ a video game played on said game machine to control or change animation and display of the character play of the video game, and

    wherein said game card includes, in a machine-readable manner, printed dots distributed within blocks each of which has a predetermined area, and by printing the dots with different distributions, at least the identification data and the character data are machine-readably recorded on said game card to control or change animation and display of the character play of the video game.

63. (previously presented) A game system for playing a video game using a plurality of game cards, each card including a graphical image and recorded information comprising:

    reading circuitry for reading information from said plurality of game cards;

    a game information storage medium for storing data indicative of the information recorded on said plurality of game cards; and

a game machine including a processing system for executing a game program, said game program including instructions obtained from each of said plurality of cards.

64. (previously presented) A game system according to claim 63, wherein said reading circuitry is operable to read data from a two-dimensional dot array recorded on each of said plurality of cards.

65. (previously presented) For use in a video game system for playing a video game using a plurality of game cards, said video game system including reading circuitry for reading information from said plurality of game cards, a game information storage medium for storing data indicative of the information recorded on said plurality of game cards, and a game machine including a processing system for executing a game program, a plurality of game cards comprising:

a first game card having graphical information embodied thereon for graphically depicting game related information and having encoded thereon a first set of program instructions for execution by said processing system; and

a second game card having graphical information thereon graphically depicting game related information and having encoded thereon a second set of program instructions for execution by said processing system, wherein at least said first game card and said second game card must be read by said reading circuitry to enable said processing system to execute said game program.

66. (previously presented) A plurality of game cards according to claim 65, wherein each of said first game card and said second game card include a two-dimensional dot array recorded thereon.

67. (previously presented) A method of operating a game system for playing a video game using a plurality of game cards, each card including a graphical image and recorded information, said game system including reading circuitry for reading information from said plurality of game cards, a storage device for storing a first set of program instructions, and a processing system for executing a game program, said method of operating said game system comprising:

executing by said processing system said first set of program instructions stored in said storage device,

reading recorded information from said plurality of game cards,

storing said recorded information from said plurality of game cards in a memory in said game system, and

executing instructions from each of said plurality of game cards.

68. (previously presented) A method according to claim 67, wherein said storage device for storing a first set of program instructions is embodied in a card reading module, and said processing system is embodied in a hand held housing, said card reading module being removably connectable to said hand-held housing.

69. (previously presented) A method according to claim 67, further including:

determining whether a sufficient number of cards have been read to execute instructions obtained from said plurality of cards.

70. (previously presented) A method according to claim 67 further including:

rearranging the order of stored information read from said plurality of cards.

71. (previously presented) A method according to claim 67 wherein the recorded information read from said plurality of game cards includes program sequence data and the method further includes rearranging the order of stored information read from said plurality of cards based on the program sequence data.

72. (previously presented) A method according to claim 67 wherein the recorded information read from said plurality of game cards includes total program amount data and the method further includes determining whether a sufficient number of cards have been read to execute instructions obtained from said plurality of cards based on the total program amount data.